AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Page 1, after the title, please insert:

BACKGROUND

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 20, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Thus, if an empty container is sterilized, hardly any more steam is required on the "inside" as on the "outside" (in order to reach 134°C): the valve is then not substantially loaded with flow pressure.

A2

A3

Page 4, after line 18, please insert:

SUMMARY

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 22, with the following rewritten paragraph:

According to a feature of the present invention, a stop prevents a valve body from closing, and is disabled before or during a venting phase through pressure differentiations. This feature overcomes the above mentioned ~~This object is achieved by the features specified in the characterizing part of patent claim 1 insofar as~~ load- or process-related condensation problems.

According to another feature of the present invention, a temperature sensor is prevented from premature cooling through screening. This feature addresses the above mentioned ~~and by the features specified in the characterizing part of claim 2, insofar as it concerns the~~ load- or process-related condensation problems or the problems associated with the premature cooling of the temperature sensor.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 14, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The complete sensor, after switch-on is effected, is now also shut off in a gas-tight manner with respect to the bellows space. The recoil temperature of [C.] 95 °C prevails in the sensor space at this instant, so that the temperature sensor cannot continue to cool down inside the sensor space (evaporation can no longer take place); the sensor space itself "conserves" a comparatively high temperature of 95 °C during the entire drying. As a result, it becomes possible to carry out the vacuum drying for as long as desired in a vacuum which is as low as desired without the recoil temperature being reached prematurely inside the sensor space. As a result, premature undesirable switching of the sensor is reliably prevented.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

This object is achieved by ~~the features specified in the characterizing part of patent claim 3~~ providing two snap-disk temperature sensors in a snap-disk stack, each having different temperature behaviors. The present invention also features a design and arrangement of the snap disks as provided in ~~follow from further subclaims and~~ the exemplary embodiment described below with reference to the drawing.

Page 7, after line 19, please insert:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Page 9, after line 9, please insert:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraph:

~~The~~ Referring to Fig. 1, the sterilization container consists of the trough 10 and the lid 12. The trough has a sloping bottom 14 and an encircling base frame 16. A sealing ring 18 of L-shaped cross section is arranged between the top rim of the trough 10 and the lid 12 (Fig. 3). This sealing ring, with its inwardly pointing leg, is captively inserted into an encircling groove 20 of the lid 12 and effects a seal downward and outward. The sealing ring 18 accordingly has positive locking in the horizontal, so that adhesive bonding need not be effected, but rather the seal can be exchanged on the spot without any effort. Even if the seal "sticks" slightly to the trough after prolonged mounting, the positive locking enables the lid to be removed without the seal being released from the latter. The seal has a double sealing seat: end-face contact on the one hand (especially at first - when the container is not under vacuum but is only closed with the fasteners), but, when the pressure force is increased (when the pressure difference builds up), specific displacement of the seal into the cavity, enclosed in an encircling manner, in such a way that the vertical surfaces also become tight.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

134°C during heating / 30-50°C during cooling: this valve would "function" during every sterilization program which reaches 134°C.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Disadvantage: it would not operate if, for example, a 120°C program is run (for it would of course then never switch "ON").

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

120°C during heating / 30 - 50°C during cooling: this valve would function in a 120°C program, and also to a limited extent in a 134°C program, although involving risks: if the valve closes at 120°C, a further pressure increase in the gas space of the bellows is no longer possible (only its venting ...); but it is not until 120°C that a pressure of 2.1 hPa prevails (saturated-steam curve). If a container is now sterilized in a 134°C program, a further pressure increase to 3.2 - 3.4 hPa is effected. This pressure increase (difference is 1.1 - 1.3 hPa) would compress the bellows, and could therefore not penetrate into the container, with the result that either the correct sterilization conditions are not reached inside the container or that the container does not withstand the pressure difference and implodes.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 22, with the following rewritten paragraph:

134°C and 120°C programs are the two standard temperature levels in hospital sterilization. A user therefore ought to have different valves (for 120°C or 134°C level) and also to attach or exchange these valve before use. This is conceivable, but awkward and susceptible to errors. The snap-disk arrangement described below avoids this disadvantage by the valve being designed in such a way that it can be used at all the common sterilization levels.